

Insights from the 2017 Creative Effectiveness Lions (Sample)



WARC

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Themes from this report

1

Video in all formats is integral to effective campaigns

Online video is now a key channel for creative effectiveness – a reflection of the growing range of video options for marketers, and the increasing consumption of video across screens. It is typically used alongside social media, PR, and (on bigger-budget campaigns) TV. Among the shortlisted entries to the 2017 Creative Effectiveness Lions, TV and online video were the most used 'lead' media. The challenge is optimising video usage across screens and across platforms, both online and offline – campaigns such as John Lewis' 'Man on the Moon' and 'Justino' by Loterias Y Apuestas del Estado show how this can be achieved.

2

From social-led to social as a support

Social media remains the most used channel overall, but compared with previous years it is used far less frequently as a lead channel. This may reflect a couple of key trends in social. First, the growing importance of video means that social is being used to host and amplify video content – in these cases it is the video, rather than the platform it is hosted on, that is taking the lead role (MACMA's 'ManBoobs4Boobs', for example). Second, the changing approach of social platforms means the emphasis has shifted away from using social as a community, towards social as a platform for driving reach, often in support of other channels (as in the Art Institute of Chicago's 'Van Gogh's Bedrooms: Let Yourself In').

3

Purpose-led advertising is dominant – but issues remain

Purpose-led advertising, both through non-profit campaigns and brands that used a CSR or sustainability message, was a major feature of the 2017 Creative Effectiveness shortlist. The use of online video and PR enabled several lower-budget campaigns to create an out-size impact in terms of global awareness, societal change and even changes to the law. However, research has shown that while people tend to like messages about social good, they are often only weakly motivated by them. The best CSR campaigns, such as Ariel's 'Share the Load' or 'Beauty Tips by Reshma', are often personally relevant or genuinely local.

4

Emotion remains central to best-practice campaigns

It's been well documented that using emotion is an effective strategy for long-term brand building, and this message is reflected in these highly-rated campaigns. Use of emotion as a creative strategy increased compared to 2016, and it was used by 71% of the shortlist. Storytelling was also an important strategy for the shortlist, reflecting the number of purpose-driven and CSR campaigns, but was also used by more commercial winners such as 'Sarah and Juan' by Extra Gum. An emotion-led insight was used to create a cohesive story across media, playing each channel to its strengths while maintaining a clear narrative.

Executive Summary

The Creative Effectiveness Lions celebrate the measurable impact of creativity. The work needs to demonstrate hard results over the long term; that is, how the work drove tangible business effects, was instrumental to cultural change or integral in the achievement of brand purpose.

This report analyses the 122 Cannes Creative Effectiveness Lions entries published on warc.com. This includes analysis of 28 shortlisted entries – which between them won 21 Creative Effectiveness Lions.

All the entries have previously won a Lion for their creative, and so the winning case studies in this report represent best-in-class examples of effective advertising with powerful creative. As a collection of case studies they provide ample evidence and benchmarks for effective advertising practice, and a comparison with entries from previous years also identifies interesting trends and changes in practice over time.

The data from the 2017 entries throws up several trends. First, there are significant changes in the choice of channel among these campaigns.

More than any previous year, online video has shown itself to be a key channel for creative effectiveness, reflecting the increasing consumption across screens. Television remains highly-effective for bigger-budget campaigns. There were two Creative Effectiveness Lions winners from John Lewis, both 'Man on the Moon' and 'Tiny Dancer' won awards. These campaigns were each built around a powerful television ad, that was also easy to share on social media.

These findings tally with recent research (from the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising in the UK) that suggests TV is significantly more effective when combined with online channels than when it is used on its own.

Winners with smaller budgets, that focused on an online video included 'ManBoobs4Boobs' by MACMA and 'Beauty Tips by Reshma' for Make Love Not Scars.

Low-budget video-based campaigns tend to use PR in support. One other notable trend this year is the use of experiential or 'real-world'

activation to enhance the PR effort. This can be seen in campaigns such as the Grand Prix, 'Van Gogh's Bedrooms: Let Yourself In'.

Although it is the most-used channel overall, social media is used much less frequently as a lead channel. This year social performed more of a supportive or amplifying role to increase reach, rather than being a central strategy for community engagement. This reflects the changing nature of social platforms. Facebook, for example, now promotes itself as both a video platform and as a way to achieve reach.

A year of 'purpose'

Purpose-led advertising is a dominant theme, with record numbers of non-profit and CSR-led campaigns among the shortlist. The use of online video, social media and PR enabled several low-budget campaigns to make an outsize global impact.

The rise of 'purpose' poses challenges for the Creative Effectiveness jurors. In an interview

with WARC, Jonathan Mildenhall, Jury President and Chief Marketing Officer at Airbnb revealed that impact was a key criteria for the judging this year – that is, in terms of impact on the target audience, impact on the brand's business, impact on society and culture, and impact on the creative community.

Reflecting this focus, several winners were powerful campaigns with low budgets that had an outsize impact for the investment, such as MACMA's 'ManBoobs4Boobs' and 'The Swedish Number'. However, he cautions that judging of cause-based marketing was particularly rigorous. "Over the last few years, we've seen a lot of work that is leaning into social causes, but to be honest, there's increasing cynicism about the authenticity and the integrity of such work."

The theme of purpose-led marketing is also investigated in this report by Heather Andrew, CEO of Neuro-Insight and Nigel Hollis, Chief Global Analyst at Kantar Millward Brown. Andrew explains that while people like campaigns with a social

appeal, they don't necessarily find them personally relevant and so may be only weakly motivated by them. "General sweeping statements about social good within a campaign are likely to get conscious approval, but it is far less likely to drive real action."

However, many Creative Effectiveness winners demonstrated the right balance of genuinely local or personal with powerful emotional messaging. As Andrew explains: "Our brains need not just to be engaged emotionally but also to identify with protagonists, and brands need to be introduced in a context that comprises an authentic part of a compelling narrative."

In his comments, Hollis also highlights the importance of focusing not just on the issue, but the brand itself and understanding its customers, "The better you understand the people who are most important to your business, the more you can stand for something fundamentally important in their eyes."

A winning campaign that is

a masterclass in purpose-led advertising is Ariel's 'Share the Load'. The first-person narration and compelling storytelling, with relevance to the brand, resulted in a very strong campaign. It won a Gold Lion in the Longer-Term Creative Effectiveness category as well as a Silver for Creative Effectiveness. In this report, the team behind the campaign from BBDO India share seven lessons they learned, and how they created a series of acts, not ads.

Finally, it is clear from the entries that emotion remains central to creative effectiveness – and, indeed, more brands are looking to use it. Compared with 2016, the number of campaigns using emotion as a creative strategy has increased: it was an approach employed by 71% of the shortlisted campaigns, among them 'Sarah and Juan' for Extra Gum and 'Help a Child Reach 5'.

Focus on the Grand Prix

The report also includes a deep dive on the campaign that won the Creative Effectiveness Grand Prix,

the Art Institute of Chicago's 'Van Gogh's Bedrooms: Let Yourself In'. The campaign impressed as a local activation that had global impact. Jury President Jonathan Mildenhall commented: "What made it significant to all of us was the impact that it had; the target audience responded, and as a result the campaign had a significant impact on the business."

In two commentaries focused on the top-rated entry, Pete Lefebvre, Creative Director, and Clifford Schwander, Executive Vice President at Leo Burnett, share insights behind creating the Grand Prix-winning campaign, and Martin Broad, Head of Insight at Ebiquity, offers his thoughts on what made it such a successful strategy. The Grand Prix's innovative use of media demonstrates several of the key themes identified in the report, and in particular highlights the power of PR, which as jury member Alegra O'Hare stated "is an integral part in the success of creating massive impact and scale."

What is Creative Effectiveness?



Simon Cook, Director of Awards, Cannes Lions, explains how the Creative Effectiveness Lions celebrate the measurable impact of creativity, and shares some top tips for entrants

What is Creative Effectiveness?

Creative Effectiveness is the clearest example of how Cannes Lions believes in the value of creativity for business, for change and for good in the world. In short, it's creative work that works. The key word being 'effectiveness'. This Lion is the only global award that truly recognises the direct correlation between highly creative, award-winning work and business driving results.

This is an award that gets clients particularly excited. It's the Lion which speaks their language, and clients themselves have featured in the jury line-up since 2015. This year Creative Effectiveness received a record number of submissions, sending a clear signal that brands were part of the new generation of campaigners for creativity.

Results need to be solid and proven but many entries now focus on brand-building stories that deliver awareness and engagement – campaigns that have not only demonstrated commercial success but have also forged a

meaningful, long-term relationship with consumers. So it's also about shifting culture – and being able to prove that.

New Categories

Until 2017, Creative Effectiveness consisted of a single category. Our juries were finding it increasingly difficult to judge like for like so subcategories were created to make it easier, and to ensure the value of the Lion. We now have: Global and Regional specific categories, Longer-term Effectiveness, for campaigns that have run for up to 3 years, Creative Effectiveness for Good, focusing on charity and non-profit work and Creative Marketing Effectiveness, for in-house and client side teams.

Tips for Entrants: How to Win a Lion in Creative Effectiveness

- ☑ Be concise
 - Keep your answers to the point
- ☑ Answer the question being asked
 - Think about which information fits best in each section of the paper

- ☑ Answer all of the questions in the paper as fully as you can
- ☑ Provide all the results you have to hand
 - Stats and figures are preferred by the jury, but you can describe the impact anecdotally if you don't have them
- ☑ Tell the story of the work
 - Don't assume the jury already knows the work
 - Be sure to only focus on a single campaign
- ☑ Explain the context and cultural significance of the campaign (remember the jury are from all over the world)
- ☑ Tailor each entry to each category you're entering

For any questions about Creative Effectiveness or how to enter, contact Liz Loizou, Creative Effectiveness Awards Manager, LizL@canneslions.com

Notes from the Jury President



WARC interviewed Jonathan Mildenhall, Creative Effectiveness Jury President and Chief Marketing Officer, Airbnb, to find out the inside story from the judging

What was your approach to judging this year's entries?

My jury and I have been talking impact. Impact, impact, impact. Creative effectiveness is about impact. Is the idea impacting the brand's audience? Is the idea impacting the brand's business? Is the idea impacting the culture? And for us as industry judges, is the idea impacting our creative community through its excellence?

What characterised the winning campaigns?

First, the idea was not dependent on the size of the budget. In fact we had two gold winners whose budgets were clearly less than the cost of renting a small boat in Cannes. And yet these ideas were huge, they were authentic, and they were creative ideas that made a true global impact. And the second point to stress is that fortune really does favour the brave.

All of the gold winners are based on ideas that are genuinely innovative and in some cases, are downright risky. So it's important

to commend the relationship behind each of these ideas, clearly the clients and the agencies understand how to live in that uncomfortable space where it's necessary for the work to be truly remarkable.

Why did you award the Grand Prix?

This year's winner for Creative Effectiveness was the outstanding case from the Art Institute of Chicago's Vincent Van Gogh's Bedroom. What made it significant to all of us was the impact that it had; the target audience responded, and as a result the campaign had a significant impact on the business.

During this year's festival, it felt like a lot of the opinion began to move away from brand purpose into a more rigorous consideration of the business case for cause-based marketing. Your take?

Over the last few years, we've seen a lot of work that is leaning into social causes, but to be honest, there's increasing cynicism about the authenticity and the integrity

of such work, and I think it's important that brands do lean into social issues that they know their communities and their consumers care about, but for this year's Creative Effectiveness, we were very disciplined about the types of cause-related work that should be worthy of award recognition. For us, and you'll see this in the body of silvers that we recognised, every single one of those causes actually worked so effectively that they changed laws in market. I think increasingly people are going to be scrutinising cause-related entries to ensure that they actually had a very clear social objective at the heart and they actually met that objective as far as changing something in society to make society better. Among the winners there were incredibly bold and significant ideas that weren't designed just to get headlines or win awards but were actually designed to change laws and change culture. We were very inspired as a jury about the level of creativity that is driving cultural change for the better of humanity.



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Insights from the 2017 Creative Effectiveness Lions

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- 🕒 The WARC Awards
- 🕒 The WARC Prize for Asian Strategy
- 🕒 The WARC Innovation Awards
- 🕒 The WARC Prize for MENA Strategy

More about all WARC Award schemes can be found [here](#) 🕒

Case Finder

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